



# South Atlantic Update

Published for fishermen & women and others interested in marine conservation

September, 199

## Council Combines Snapper Grouper Amendments 8 & 9; Approves Options for Public Hearing

Due to overlap of the issues in Snapper Grouper Amendments 8 and 9, the council voted to combine both documents into one amendment. Amendment 8 now includes options for both effort control and limited entry in the snapper grouper fishery.

This amendment proposes to limit permit holders to those who can demonstrate landings of snapper grouper species of at least 1,000 pounds in at least 2 of the 3 years, 1993-1995. Landings will be verified through logbooks filed with the National Marine Fisheries Service prior to August 20, 1996.

It also proposes to divide the fishery into 5 subdivisions, and offers options for endorsements to qualify for each category.

Fishermen should be aware the issues in this amendment are very complex. Please give yourself enough time to review the options in the document before the hearings. For a listing of proposed actions and options in the amendment, see pages 12-18 of this newsletter. For the public hearing schedule, see page 11. If you would like a copy of the public hearing document, contact the council office at 803-571-4366.

## Council Modifies 1996/1997 Atlantic King Mackerel Quota



At the August meeting in Charleston, SC, the council voted to request the National Marine Fisheries Service implement a 6.8 million pound quota for the 1996/97 Atlantic king mackerel fishing season.

The council had previously voted for a 6 million pound total allowable catch (TAC), but decided to reconsider the quota upon learning of new information used in the assessment for Gulf stock king mackerel, in addition to recent Atlantic kingfish landings, which show that approximately 40% of this year's quota was taken during the first three months of the season (April, May and June).

The vote passed by a narrow 6 to 5 margin. Some council members felt the TAC should remain a more conservative 6 million pounds, questioning as to whether or not raising the TAC was risk-prone, given that fishermen are reporting smaller fish and

lower catches in the fishery. The 6 million pound TAC was also the recommendation of Mackerel Advisory Panel.

Other council members argued raising the TAC to 6.8 million pounds would still be conservative, given that it falls within the 4.1-6.8 million pound allowable biological catch (ABC) range set by the Stock Assessment Panel. Concern was also expressed about a possible closure of the fishery in NC with a 6 million pound TAC, if there were increased catches to the south early in the fishing year.

The council voted to ask for a new stock assessment for Atlantic king mackerel using similar information used in the Gulf Assessment. Had the same information been used to calculate both stocks, it is unclear as to whether or not the Atlantic ABC range would be higher or lower.

## Welcome New Council Members!

The Secretary of Commerce has appointed one new member to the South Atlantic Council, and made one reappointment:

•**Marsha E. Hass** replaces John Floyd in the South Carolina At Large seat. Ms. Hass is a member of the SC Bar Association and Professor of Legal Studies at the College of Charleston. She is the president of Marsh Grass Charters, Inc. in Charleston, South Carolina.

•**Benjamin C. Hartig** of Hobe Sound, Florida was appointed a second term. He was given the most uncontested reappointment award at the August council meeting. *Glad to have you back Ben!*

•Also, **Lieutenant Commander Eduardo Pino** of the Seventh Coast Guard District replaces Lieutenant Commander Chris Sinnett as the Coast Guard designee on the council.

Please look for Council Member Profiles on both Ms. Hass and LTCDR Pino in the next *Update*.

## Council Elections Held; Congratulations to New Chairman, Vice-Chairman

The council elected **Benjamin C. Hartig** as the 1996-1997 council chairman. Mr. Hartig served last year as the council vice-chairman, and was recently reappointed to serve a second term in the Florida At-Large seat on the council.

**Pete S. Moffitt** of Swansboro, North Carolina was elected council vice-chairman. Mr. Moffitt has served on the council in the North Carolina At-Large seat since 1994.

The council would like to thank former chairman, **David Cupka**, for the wonderful job he did last year in office.

Thanks and best wishes also go out to former council members, **John Floyd** of Spartanburg, South Carolina and Lieutenant Commander **Chris Sinnett** of the Coast Guard.



## Council Welcomes New Advisory Panel Members

**T**he council would like to welcome all our new advisory panel members. If you would like a listing of the new advisory panel compositions, please call the council office and request a September Membership Directory.

We still need qualified people to fill the following positions on several of our panels:

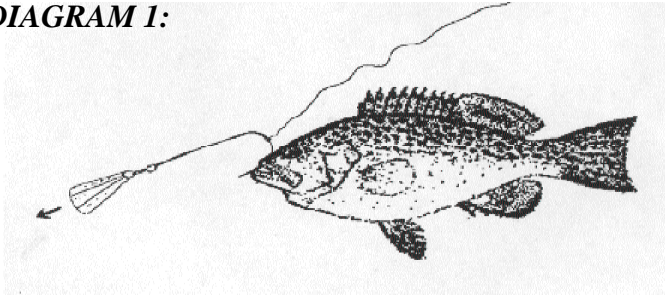
- ◆ **Coral:** a Florida commercial fisherman and a Georgia recreational fisherman. We are also looking for someone with a habitat/environmental background to serve on the Coral Advisory Panel.
- ◆ **Habitat:** North Carolina and South Carolina commercial fishermen.
- ◆ **Snapper Grouper:** a charterboat captain from North Carolina.
- ◆ **Calico Scallop:** A North Carolina boat captain, a North Carolina dealer and someone with a scientific/conservation background who is knowledgeable in the *Oculina* variety of deep water corals.

We also have openings for people with conservation/environmental backgrounds for our coral, shrimp, and rock shrimp advisory panels.

# Alternative Method for Returning Fish to Sea

A Guest Column by Jim Bohnsack, Research Fishery Biologist,  
National Marine Fisheries Service Miami Lab

**DIAGRAM 1:**



*To release the fish, run a barbless stainless steel hook through the upper jaw lip from above. Attach the hook eye to a short line with a 1/2 pound weight. Attach a second line to the arch of the hook to lower the fish.*

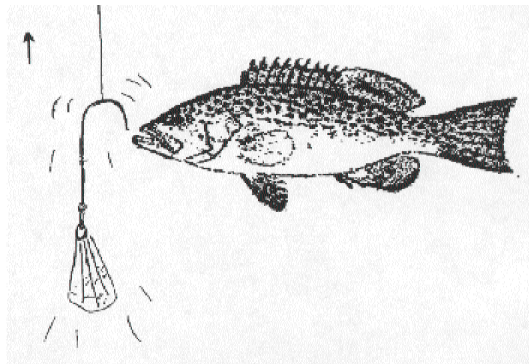
Dr. Colin Attwood, visiting as part of a U.S.-South African scientific program, provided me with information on a rather novel method for returning undersized fish to depth with minimum additional trauma. The method is commonly used by recreational fishermen in South Africa, is apparently effective and may be better than deflating air bladders by puncturing the fish.

A barbless stainless steel hook is run through the upper jaw lip from above. The hook eye is attached to a short line with a 200 gram (1/2 lb.) weight. A second line, attached to the arch of the hook, is used to lower the fish (and weight) to the bottom. Once at depth, a sharp jerk on the line pulls the hook (and weight) free from the fish where it can be retrieved and used again.

**A**dantages of this method over deflating fish by puncturing the air bladder and throwing it overboard are 1. The fish is rapidly recompressed which immediately reverses the gas expansion; 2. The fish does not have to swim to the bottom because of the attached weight; 3. The speed of the decent reduces the time of exposure to midwater predators; 4. The small hole through the upper lip is much less trauma than a puncture wound to the air bladder and body cavity; 5. There is considerably less risk of infection; and 6. The method is simple to use and requires less knowledge by the fisherman.

This is a great example of not having to rediscover the wheel and learning from our overseas colleagues. Any comments on the effectiveness of this method would be appreciated.  
Jim\_Bohnsack@noaa.gov.

**DIAGRAM 2:**



*Once at depth, a sharp jerk on the line pulls the hook and the weight free from the fish where it can be retrieved and used again.*

# Law Enforcement Report

## **MAGNUSON ACT**

- A sailfish was seized by the Florida marine Patrol from a charter vessel for the illegal sale of sailfish. The Charter vessel did not have any permits and had previously been fined \$6,000 in October for the same violation.

- On 5/10/96, 936 whole live American lobsters were seized by NMFS agents and Florida Marine Patrol Officers. The lobsters were undersized and seized from a West Palm Beach, FL seafood business.

- The 1996 Sport Mini Lobster Season went into effect in the Keys. Over 80 recreational boardings were conducted between US Coast Guard, Florida Marine Patrol, and National Marine Fisheries Service personnel. Several state violations were documented, and over 30 written warnings were issued.

## **ATLANTIC TUNA**

- NMFS agents made an Atlantic tuna case against a Neww Jersey operator found in possession of tuna fillets off Morehead City, NC. Ten plastic bags of tuna chunks were seized.

## **ENDANGERED SPECIES**

- A criminal investigation is being conducted by the NMFS Atlantic District Office involving the butchering of a green sea turtle. The turtle was found in the middle of the road in Ft. Pierce, FL.

- The NMFS Atlantic District Office is conducting an investigation regarding TED alternations and the taking and killing of numerous protected sea turtles. Interviews from sources indicate that as many as 120 sea turtles were taken during a two year period.

- As a result of intercepting an internet message, NMFS agents are conducting an investigation on a South Carolina individual for possible violations of the Endangered Species Act. His internet messages described the proper way of utilizing loggerhead sea turtles as bait for catching spottail bass.

## **LACEY ACT**

- Kenneth Hawkins of Hollywood, FL was convicted on charges related to the illegal importation of commercial quantities of fish from the Bahamas. Hawkins pled guilty to violating the Lacey Act, which prohibits importing fish taken or possessed in violation of foreign law. According to the information filed in court, between 1/1 and 10/23, 1993, Hawkins imported more than \$70,000 worth of fish aboard his vessel and sold the fish to a commercial establishment in the Fort Lauderdale area. Hawkins faces a possible maximum penalty of five years incarceration and a fine of \$250,000.

- On 5/17/96, James C. Cook pled guilty to importation of fish taken and possessed in violation of the laws of the Bahamas, contrary to the Lacey Act. Mr. Cook was sentenced to three months probation and 30 hours of community service.

- A NMFS agent cited a North Carolina seafood dealer for possessing 13 bags of untagged oysters. The dealer had been previously warned regarding the requirement to tag all shellfish containers. The product was seized and destroyed by the state.

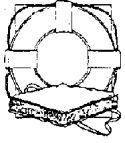
## **SUMMARY SETTLEMENT CASES**

- A Savannah, GA operator, cited for possession of undersized amberjack, paid a \$3,100 summary settlement penalty and forfeited 2,680 pounds of amberjack, which were sold for \$2,412.

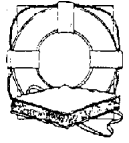
- A NC operator paid a \$2,000 summary settlement assessment for shrimping with modified TEDs.

- Florida Marine Patrol in Pompano Beach seized four swordfish carcasses from a Florida fisherman who was issued and paid a \$800 summary assessment. The carcasses were all undersized and exceeded the 15% tolerance allowed under the swordfish regulations.

# The Voluntary Compliance Program: Seeking Compliance Through Education and Understanding



by Suzanne Horn, Special Agent in Charge  
National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Region



The National Marine Fisheries Service Office of Enforcement has implemented a Voluntary Compliance Program (VCP). The VCP was adopted as a national initiative by the office as a proactive means to prepare for the challenges ahead.

The VCP is designed to focus on results, and not on process and punishment. It supplements and supports traditional enforcement operations by providing alternate enforcement action plans using proven community-oriented and problem-oriented policing models and techniques.

The foundation of the VCP rests on education and understanding through teamwork and partnerships. It stresses cooperative approaches with marine resource stakeholders to enlist their support and participation in tailoring solutions to marine resource enforcement problems. It employs voluntary, rather than punitive measures to encourage and increase overall compliance in the regulated community. The five parts to the VCP are:

(1) **Partners-in-Problem Solving** teams the Office of Enforcement with marine resource stakeholders in grassroots partnerships to identify, define and solve marine resource enforcement problems with enduring tailor-made solutions.

(2) **The Fix-It Notice (FIN) Program** provides the first time offender a good faith opportunity to "fix" minor technical violations within a designated time frame without threat of penalty. The FIN Program is jointly administered by the Office of Enforcement and the Office of the Assistant General Counsel for Enforcement and Litigation.

(3) **ProACTION** uses education to promote understanding of the NOAA/NMFS enforcement mission. It supports environmental education through the Office of Enforcement's Marine Mammal Loan Program and disseminates important enforcement messages through a variety of outreach mediums.

(4) **The NOAA Fisheries Enforcement Hotline** provides live operator coverage, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for anyone in the United States to report a federal fisheries violation. The telephone service is free to the caller and enables instant contact with enforcement personnel. To report a violation call 1-800-853-1964.

(5) **Recognition and Rewards (R & A)** offers tangible appreciation to marine resource stakeholders for special contributions toward conserving the nation's living marine resources.

For more information on the Voluntary Compliance Program, contact the National Marine Fisheries Service Office of Enforcement at 813-570-5370.

# Golden Crab Regulations Effective September 26, 1996

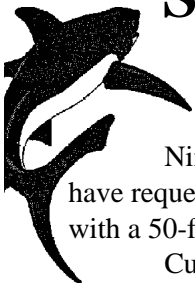
The final rule to implement the Golden Crab Fishery Management Plan was published in the Federal Register on August 27, 1996. Fishermen and others on the South Atlantic Council's golden crab mailing list were notified immediately by news release that they had until September 26 to submit applications for vessel permits to the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Due to the long lived, slow growing characteristics of golden crab, as well as lack of scientific information, the council voted last October to take a conservative approach in managing this fishery by implementing a limited entry program.

**T**o qualify for an initial vessel permit, vessel owners must have provided records documenting that the vessel landed golden crab harvested from the South Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone (from 3 to 200 nautical miles off the coasts of NC, SC, GA, & FL) in quantities of at least 600 pounds in whole live weight by April 7, 1995 (the control date for the fishery), or at least 2,500 pounds by September 1, 1995.

The council will receive a report in November on the number of vessels which qualify for golden crab permits, and may reassess the need to modify the limited entry program in this fishery.

The final Golden Crab Fishery Management Plan may be obtained by calling the council office at 803-571-4366, or you may e-mail your request (see page 1 for address). Questions regarding permits should be directed to the National Marine Fisheries Service Permits Branch at 813-570-5326.



## Shark Gillnetters Ask Council For Mackerel Incidental Catch Allocation

Nine boat captains using drift gillnets in the small coastal shark fishery off Cape Canaveral, Florida, have requested the council allow a 500-pound trip limit of coastal migratory pelagic fish in the shark fishery, with a 50-fish king mackerel limit.

Currently it is illegal to retain king and Spanish mackerel and cobia aboard a vessel carrying drift gillnets, and, if approved by Commerce Secretary Kantor, Amendment 8 will limit harvest of king mackerel to hook and line gear only, although nonconforming gear would be allowed to retain up to the bag limit. The shark fishermen argue they inadvertently catch these species in their nets, resulting in wasted resources because the discarded fish die.

In a letter to the council dated March 8, 1996, the shark fishermen indicated an economic necessity to land and sell the 8 to 15 king mackerel per trip they catch, due to the stress of the gillnet fishery closure in Florida.

Dealing with bycatch is a difficult task for the council, since the fish are thrown overboard dead, and are not counted against the quota. Though the stock assessments show king and Spanish mackerel to be not overfished, fishermen have testified that their mackerel catches are lower than recent years, and sizes are smaller.

The council can recommend the Secretary allow for bycatch retention, but in order to do so would like to see a cap on the number of vessels participating in the shark fishery. Council members also expressed interest in seeing a reduction in net size and implementation of fishing zones before allowing an incidental catch allocation. The shark fishery is managed by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

# NOAA Southeast Region Gets New General Counsel

Mike McLemore has been a familiar face around the South Atlantic Council table since 1990, when he was hired as a staff attorney for the National Atmospheric Administration's Southeast Regional Office Counsel. Mike has recently been promoted to the NOAA's Southeast Regional Counsel.

**I**n advising the councils, the role of the General help ensure the integrity of the management the administrative record in accordance with the Act. In doing so, Mike serves not only to guide but he also plays a vital role in ensuring fairness to the keeping the council's management measures in line with Standards.



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*'Mike is bright and innovative, and he's very proactive in terms of giving the council advice.'*

*-Council member Susan Shipman*

*NOAA General Counsel, Mike McLemore, relaxes at a council meeting*

Coming from a legal background in private practice, Mike says he fell into doing fisheries work when he applied for the attorney position with NOAA and found the work very interesting and rewarding. "The more I learned about it, the more I wanted to learn," he said. Anyone who has observed Mike at a council meeting knows he's learned quite a bit about fisheries management. When a question arises relative to policies and procedures, Mike can always be counted on to find the answer. He finds many rewards in the work he does, but mainly likes the diversity of the position. "It's a good feeling of accomplishment when you hear someone at a public hearing say a management decision was the right thing to do," he said.

The council's legal record since 1990, when Mike became its primary legal advisor, speaks volumes for the work he has accomplished. The National Marine Fisheries Service, an agency of NOAA which implements regulations set forth by the council, has only been sued three times on South Atlantic Council actions; a lawsuit against Amendment 4 to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan which prohibited fish traps in the South Atlantic, ended in victory for the agency, a lawsuit against Amendment 5 implementing the wreckfish ITQ program was successfully defended, and lawsuits against Amendment 2 to the Coral Fishery Management Plan, dealing with aquaculture, were dropped. Mike attributes the council's awareness of the importance of public input when creating fisheries regulations to making his job a little easier.

"There are times when things happen quickly and the council can't get as much notice to the public as it would like, but generally, I think council members are aware that they make better informed decisions when they allow more time for public input," he said.

**M**arried since 1979, Mike and his wife Theresa have two daughters, Claire and Marlana, and they live in the Tampa Bay area. On average, Mike's job requires a week per month travel, so he said the weekends are really important for his family. When asked what he does in his free time, Mike said, "We entertain a lot with friends who have kids." The couple recently held a pig roast, complete with a guest list of 50 and lots of games for the kids. Mike also runs about 20 miles per week and occasionally does some freshwater or near-shore fishing.



# South Atlantic Rock Shrimp Regulations Final

Effective October 9, 1996, trawling for rock shrimp in the south Atlantic will be prohibited between 27°30' N. lat. and 28°30' N. lat. in the area extending shoreward of the 100-fathom depth contour to 80°00' W. long. The final rule to implement rock shrimp regulations (Amendment 1 to the South Atlantic Shrimp Fishery Management Plan) was published in the Federal Register on September 9, 1996.

The area closed to rock shrimp trawling was proposed by the industry as a means of achieving an acceptable balance between protecting essential bottom habitat and minimizing adverse, regulatory impacts.

Prohibiting trawling for rock shrimp in the area will enhance existing federal regulations for coral and snapper grouper by protecting essential live/hard bottom habitat including *Oculina* coral and the *Oculina* Bank Habitat Area of Particular Concern from trawl-related damage.

A secondary benefit of the trawling closure may be higher fishery yields and revenues over the long-term, because small shrimp, otherwise harvested, will be allowed to reach a larger size.

The council deliberately chose permitting and reporting and recordkeeping requirements that would minimize burdens on fishermen while still providing the information on actual landings and harvest locations necessary for management.

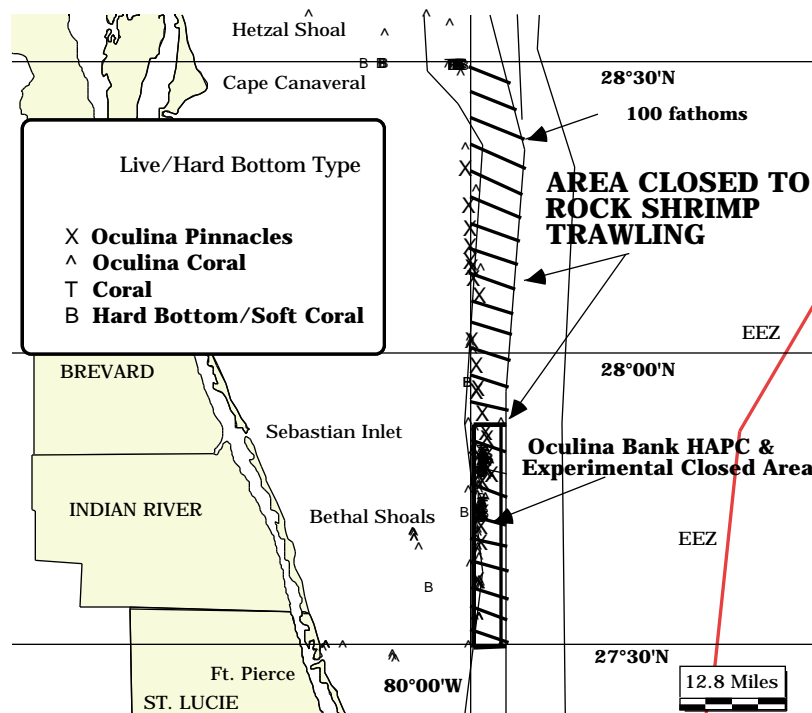
While permits are required for vessels and dealers, only the dealers are required to submit reports on landings. The council decided this approach would minimize burdens on individual fishermen. They also encouraged the National Marine Fisheries Service to use information from state fisheries agencies, particularly from Florida where most landings occur, to minimize additional reporting burdens on dealers.

Permit applications should be sent to:

**Permits Branch, NMFS Southeast Regional Office**  
**9721 Executive Center Drive, N.**  
**St. Petersburg, FL 33703**  
**Phone: (813) 570-5326**

## Area Closed to Rock Shrimp Trawling Off the East Coast of Florida:

Trawling for, or possessing rock shrimp in an area bounded to the west by 80° W longitude, to the north by 28°30' N latitude, to the south by 27°30' N latitude, and to the east by the 100 fathom (600 feet) depth contour, is prohibited.





# **South Atlantic Rock Shrimp Regulations:**

## **South Atlantic EEZ Area Closure.** (Effective October 9, 1996)

No person may trawl for rock shrimp in area east of 80°00' W. long. between 27°30' N. lat. and 28°30' N. lat. shoreward of the 100-fathom (183-m) contour, as shown on the latest edition of NOAA chart 11460 (see figure on page 8); and no person may possess rock shrimp in or from this area on board a fishing vessel.

## **Permits and fees.** (Effective November 1, 1996)

For a person aboard a vessel to fish for rock shrimp in the South Atlantic EEZ or possess rock shrimp in or from the South Atlantic EEZ, a commercial vessel permit for rock shrimp must be issued to the vessel and must be on board.

For a dealer to receive rock shrimp harvested from the South Atlantic EEZ, a dealer permit for South Atlantic rock shrimp must be issued to the dealer.

## **Recordkeeping and Reporting.** (Effective November 1, 1996)

A dealer who has been issued a permit for South Atlantic rock shrimp, and who is selected by the NMFS Southeast Regional Director must provide information on receipts of rock shrimp and prices paid on forms available from the NMFS Southeast Regional Director. The required information must be submitted to the NMFS Southeast Regional Director at monthly intervals postmarked not later than 5 days after the end of each month. Reporting frequencies and reporting deadlines may be modified upon notification by the NMFS Southeast Regional Director.

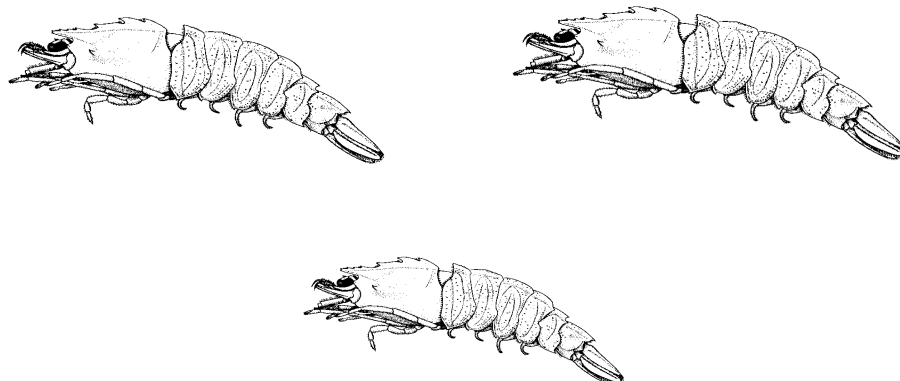
On demand, a dealer who has been issued a dealer permit for South Atlantic rock shrimp, must make available to an authorized officer all records of offloadings, purchases, or sales of rock shrimp.

## **Restrictions on Sale/Purchase.** (Effective November 1, 1996)

Rock shrimp harvested in the South Atlantic EEZ on board a vessel that does not have a valid commercial permit for rock shrimp may not be transferred, received, sold, or purchased.

Rock shrimp harvested on board a vessel that has a valid commercial permit for rock shrimp may be transferred or sold only to a dealer who has a valid permit for rock shrimp.

Rock shrimp harvested in the South Atlantic EEZ may be received or purchased by a dealer who has a valid dealer permit for rock shrimp only from a vessel that has a valid commercial permit for rock shrimp.



## Atlantic Group King Mackerel Trip Limits Approved

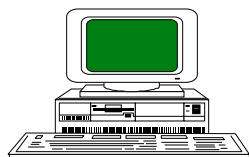
Beginning September 23, 1996, commercial trip limits for Atlantic group king mackerel will be effective in federal waters from New York through the Florida Keys. The trip limits are as follows:

Between the New York/Connecticut and Flagler/Volusia County, Florida borders, the trip limit is 3,500 pounds per day, year-round. For the April 1 through October 31 period, the following commercial vessel trip limits will apply off southeast Florida: 3,500 pounds off Volusia County, 500 pounds between the Volusia/Brevard and Dade/Monroe County boundaries, and 1,250 pounds off Monroe County, in the Florida Keys.

The South Atlantic Council proposed the trip limits in a Regulatory Amendment to the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fishery Management Plan to improve conservation of Atlantic group king mackerel, to prevent an early closure of the fishery, to protect the resource from overfishing, and to maintain healthy stocks while still allowing catches.

When the quota for Atlantic king mackerel is reached, all trip limits will become zero.

Visit the South  
Atlantic Council's  
Homepage!!!  
Our Web Site  
address is:



<http://www.safmc.nmfs.gov>

## November Meeting Preliminary Agenda

The next council meeting will be held from November 18-22, 1996 at the Sheraton Atlantic Beach Resort/Salter Path Road/Atlantic Beach, NC; telephone: 919-240-1155. The following preliminary agenda is subject to change:

Monday, November 18, 1996

**1:30 pm - 5:30 pm**

Scientific and Statistical Committee;

Tuesday, November 19, 1996

**8:30 am - 5:30 pm**

Joint Controlled Access Committee, Snapper Grouper Committee, and Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel;

Wednesday, November 20, 1996

**8:30 am - 12:00 pm**

Snapper Grouper Committee

**1:30 pm - 2:30 pm**

Advisory Panel Selection Committee (Closed Session)

**2:30pm - 5:30 pm**

Joint Shrimp Committee and Ad Hoc Shrimp Bycatch Advisory Panel

Thursday, November 21, 1996

**8:30 am - 10:30 am**

Highly Migratory Species Committee

**11:00 am - 5:30 pm**

Council Session

Friday, November 22, 1996

**8:30 am - 1:00 pm**

Council Session



# **Council Announces Snapper Grouper Amendment 8 Public Hearing Schedule**

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council will hold public hearings to solicit comments on proposed actions and options in Amendment 8 to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan. Amendment 8 includes a proposed action to limit the number of participants in the snapper grouper fishery. The amendment also contains several options for reducing effort in the fishery. The hearings will be held in several locations throughout the South Atlantic region from October 15 through October 25, 1996. Please see below for the exact dates and locations. For a list of proposed actions and options in the amendment, set pages 12-18 of this newsletter.

If you are unable to attend one of the public hearings, you may submit your comments concerning the options in Amendment 8 in writing via post, FAX or e-mail. Comments must be received by November 4, 1996. Submit comments to:

**Robert Mahood, Executive Director**  
**One Southpark Circle, Suite 306**  
**Charleston, SC 29407-4699**

**E-Mail address: [safmc@safmc.nmfs.gov](mailto:safmc@safmc.nmfs.gov); FAX: 803-769-4520**

**Tuesday, October 15, 1996, 7pm - 10pm**

Banana Bay Resort  
4590 Overseas Highway  
Marathon, FL 33050; phone: 305-743-3500

**Monday, October 21, 1996, 7pm - 10pm**

The NC Aquarium  
Airport Road  
Manteo, NC 27954; phone: 919-473-3494

**Wednesday, October 16, 1996, 7pm - 10pm**

Sheraton Hotel  
630 Clearwater Park Road  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401; phone: 561-833-1234

**Tuesday, October 22, 1996, 7pm - 10pm**

Sheraton Atlantic Beach Resort  
Salter Path Road  
Atlantic Beach, NC 28512; phone: 919-240-1155

**Wednesday, October 16, 1996, 7pm - 10pm**

Town & Country Inn  
2008 Savannah Highway  
Charleston, SC 29407; phone: 803-571-1000

**Wednesday, October 23, 1996, 7pm - 10pm**

Holiday Inn of Wilmington  
4903 Market Street  
Wilmington, NC 28405; phone: 910-799-1440

**Thursday, October 17, 1996, 7pm - 10pm**

Holiday Inn  
1300 N. Atlantic Avenue  
Cocoa Beach, FL 32931; phone: 407-783-2271

**Thursday, October 24, 1996, 7pm - 10pm**

Myrtle Beach Martinique Resort & Hotel  
7100 N. Ocean Blvd.  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29572; phone: 1-803-449-4441

**Friday, October 18, 1996, 7pm - 10pm**

Ramada Inn  
301 Governor Treutlen Drive  
Pooler(Savannah area), GA 31322; phone: 912-748-6464

**Friday, October 25, 1996, 7pm - 10pm**

Comfort Inn Oceanfront  
1515 N. 1st Street  
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250; phone: 904-241-2311

# Snapper Grouper Amendment 8 Proposes Several Options for Public Comment

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council will hold public hearings on the draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and draft Amendment 8 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region. Amendment 8 proposes management measures that (1) limit the number of participants in the snapper grouper fishery based on certain criteria; (2) assign trip limits and other controlled access measures to those who qualify to fish for snapper grouper species; (3) redefine overfishing and optimum yield; (4) reduce fishing mortality for red porgy, black sea bass, greater amberjack, vermilion snapper and gag; (5) modify logbook reporting; (6) establish a transit zone for Gulf reef fish permit holders with a trap endorsement; (7) modify allowable gear; (8) establish a seasonal closure for snapper grouper species; (9) implement a flat trip limit for mid-shelf species; (10) establish an aggregate quota for temperate mid-shelf species; and (11) allow species within the snapper grouper complex (whether whole or fillets) caught in Bahamian waters in accordance with Bahamian law to be possessed aboard a vessel in the South Atlantic EEZ and landed in the U.S. provided the vessel is in transit from the Bahamas and valid Bahamian fishing and cruising permits are onboard.

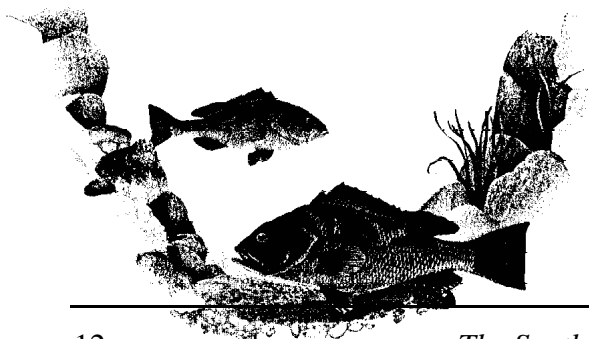
**T**he amendment is complex and covers a number of different species and measures. The following list of actions and options under consideration are provided to indicate the scope of proposed management measures. Copies of the public hearing summary and Amendment 8 are available from the Council.

**ACTION 1.** Limit permit holders to those that can demonstrate landings of at least 1,000 pounds of snapper grouper species in two of the three years - 1993, 1994, and 1995.

#### **Other Possible Options:**

- Option 1.** No Action.
- Option 2.** Limit permit holders to those that held valid snapper grouper permits for 1993, 1994 and 1995.
- Option 3.** Limit permit holders to those that can demonstrate landings of species in the snapper grouper management unit as of July 30, 1991 (control date for the snapper grouper fishery).
- Option 4.** Limit permit holders to those that can demonstrate landings of species in the snapper grouper management unit as of a date after February 1, 1992 (implementation of Snapper Grouper Logbook Program with 25% of snapper grouper permit holders selected for reporting during the 1992 fishing year) and that held valid snapper grouper permits for 1993, 1994 and 1995.
- Option 5.** Limit permit holders to those that can demonstrate landings of species in the snapper grouper

*Continued*



management unit as of January 1, 1993 (100% logbook reporting implemented) and that held valid snapper grouper permits for 1993, 1994 and 1995.

**Option 6.** Limit permit holders to those that can demonstrate landings of species in the snapper grouper management unit as of January 1, 1994 and that held valid snapper grouper permits for 1994 and 1995.

**Option 7.** Limit permit holders to those that can demonstrate landings of 1,500 - 5,000 pounds of species in the snapper grouper management unit annually (as of July 30, 1991; February 1, 1992; January 1, 1993; January 1, 1994; or January 1, 1995 - council to specify).

**ACTION 2. Control effort by establishing trip limits for sub-units of species in the management unit..**

I. Deep Shelf (DS): snowy grouper, warsaw grouper, yellowedge grouper and golden tilefish. Amberjack to continue to be managed throughout the South Atlantic as a separate unit. Wreckfish to continue under current individual transferable quota (ITQ) management regime.

In order to get a deep shelf endorsement (which would allow harvesters to land in excess of 100 pounds of a deep shelf species on any trip, harvesters would have to verify landings of deep shelf species of 5,000 pounds annually in two of the last three years (1993 – 1995).

Without a deep shelf endorsement, harvesters would be limited to 100 pounds trip limit (bycatch provision) for deep shelf species under applicable regulations.

In order to get a greater amberjack endorsement (which would allow harvesters to land in excess of 100 pounds of greater amberjack on any trip, harvesters would have to verify landings of greater amberjack of 5,000 pounds annually in two of the last three years (1993 – 1995).

Without a greater amberjack endorsement, harvesters would be limited to 100 pounds trip limit (bycatch provision) for greater amberjack under applicable regulations.

II. Temperate Mid-Shelf Complex (TEMS): red porgy, vermilion snapper, red snapper, speckled hind, gag, scamp, black sea bass, gray triggerfish and white grunt.

In order to get a TEMS endorsement (which would allow harvesters to land in excess of 100 pounds of TEMS species on any trip, harvesters would have to verify landings of TEMS species of 5,000 pounds annually in two of the last three years (1993 – 1995).

Without a TEMS endorsement, harvesters would be limited to 100 pounds trip limit (bycatch provision) for TEMS species under applicable regulations.

III. Tropical Complex (TROPS): yellowtail snapper, mutton snapper, gray snapper, lane snapper, black grouper and red grouper.

In order to get a TROPS endorsement (which would allow harvesters to land in excess of 100 pounds of a TROPS species on any trip, harvesters would have to verify landings of TROPS species of 5,000 pounds annually in two of the last three years (1993 – 1995).

Without a TROPS endorsement, harvesters would be limited to 100 pounds trip limit (bycatch provision) for TROPS species under applicable regulations.

Transferability:

A. To immediate family members: Permits with endorsements can be transferred to immediate family members but can only be used in the category for which they were originally issued. The vessel's catch history must also be transferred.

B. To new entrants in the snapper grouper fishery:

i. To receive a new permit and endorsement, two existing snapper grouper permits with endorsements must be purchased and exchanged for one new permit and endorsement. The vessels' catch histories must also be transferred.

IV. Application Oversight Committee: An Application Oversight Committee will be established upon approval of Amendment 8 to assist the NMFS Regional Director in handling disputes over eligibility for permits or endorsements. The charge of the Committee is to make sure that the criteria pertaining to eligibility or initial allocation were applied to an individual's application in a correct manner. The Committee is to be made up of one state director (or his designee) from each state in the South Atlantic Council's area of jurisdiction and the NMFS Regional Director, or his designee. NOAA General Counsel will have a non-voting advisory role on the Committee.

**Other Possible Options:**

*Continued*

**Option 1.** No Action.

**Option 2.** Those that can demonstrate at least 5,000 pounds landings of snapper grouper species annually in two of the last three years (1993-1995), will be limited to a 5,000 pound trip limit of snapper grouper species. Those who landed 1,000 pounds or greater, and who landed less than 5,000 pounds of snapper grouper species annually in two of the last three years (1993-1995), will be limited to a trip limit of 1,000 pounds. This will not replace trip limits already in place.

**Option 3.** Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Proposal: Limit entry to the snapper grouper fishery to those that can demonstrate landings of snapper grouper species between 1993 and 1995:

I. Establish two categories of endorsements for those that qualify for permits:

A. Those that reported landings of 1,000 – 5,000 pounds of snapper grouper species in one of the last three years (1993 – 1995) would be given an endorsement to fish snapper grouper species under a 1,000 pound trip limit.

B. Those that reported landings of over 5,000 pounds of snapper grouper species in one of the last three years (1993 – 1995) would be given an endorsement to fish snapper grouper species under a 5,000 pound trip limit.

II. To qualify for permit renewal:

A. A permit holder must land the poundage requirement for his/her endorsement in one of the three years preceding the application for renewal of permit.

B. A permit will expire automatically if not renewed 60 days after the date that it was up for renewal.

III. Transferability:

A. Permits with endorsements can be transferred to other individuals, but can only be used in the categories that they were originally issued.

B. To receive a new permit to enter the 1,000 – 5,000 pounds category, two existing snapper grouper permits with endorsements in that category should be bought and one retired.

C. To receive a new permit to enter the over 5,000 pounds category, three existing snapper grouper permits in the 1,000 – 5,000 pounds category should be bought and two retired or two existing snapper grouper permits with endorsements in the over 5,000 pounds category should be bought and one retired.

**Option 4.** Modified Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Proposal:

I. Establish two categories of endorsements based on logbook landings:

A. Those that reported landings of 1,000 - 5,000 pounds OR 1,000 - 10,000 pounds (Council to specify) of snapper grouper species in one OR two OR three (Council to specify) of the last three years (1993-1995) would be given a permit to fish snapper grouper species under a 1,000 pound trip limit.

B. Those that reported landings of over 5,000 OR 10,000 pounds (Council to specify) of snapper grouper species in one OR two OR three (Council to specify) of the last three years (1993-1995) would be given a permit to fish snapper grouper species under a 5,000 pound trip limit.

C. Trip limits apply to individual vessels and cannot be combined. Permits are issued to the vessel and one vessel cannot have multiple permits.

II. To qualify for permit renewal:

A. A permit holder must land the poundage requirement for his/her endorsement in one of the three years preceding the application for permit renewal. New entrants will have the catch history of the original vessel which will be used to meet this requirement.

B. A permit will automatically expire if not renewed 60 days after the date that it was up for renewal.

III. Transferability:

A. To immediate family members: Permits with endorsements can be transferred to immediate family members but can only be used in the category for which they were originally issued. The vessel's catch history must also be transferred.

B. To new entrants in the snapper grouper fishery:

i. To receive a new permit to enter the 1,000 - 5,000 OR 1,000 - 10,000 pound category, two existing snapper grouper permits with endorsements in that category must be purchased and exchanged for one new permit. The vessel's catch history must also be purchased and only one of the catch histories may be assigned to the new permit.

ii. To receive a new permit to enter the over 5,000 OR 10,000 pound category, three existing snapper grouper permits in the 1,000 - 5,000 OR 1,000 - 10,000 pound category must be purchased and exchanged for one new permit or two existing snapper grouper permits with endorsements in the over 5,000 OR 10,000 pound category must be purchased and exchanged for one new permit. The vessel's catch history must also be purchased and only one of the catch histories may be assigned to the new permit.

C. To another qualified permit holder: In each case, the vessel's catch history must also be purchased and only one of the catch histories may be assigned to the new permit.

i. The holder of a "high" trip limit permit (5,000 pound trip limit) would be allowed to exchange one high trip limit permit for one "low" (1,000 pound trip limit) trip limit permit.

ii. The holder of a high trip limit permit would be allowed to purchase an additional high trip limit permit by purchasing and exchanging three low trip limit permits or two high trip limit permits for one new high trip limit permit.

*Continued*

- iii. The holder of a high trip limit permit would be allowed to purchase a low trip limit permit (while retaining the high trip limit permit) by purchasing and exchanging two low trip limit permits for one new low trip limit permit.
  - iv. The holder of a low trip limit permit would be allowed to purchase an additional low trip limit permit (while retaining the low trip limit permit) by purchasing and exchanging two low trip limit permits for one new low trip limit permit.
  - v. The holder of a low trip limit permit would be allowed to purchase a high trip limit permit (while retaining the low trip limit permit) by purchasing and exchanging three low trip limit permits or two high trip limit permits for one new high trip limit permit.
- IV. Application Oversight Committee: An Application Oversight Committee will be established upon approval of Amendment 8 to assist the NMFS Regional Director in handling disputes over eligibility for permits or endorsements. The charge of the Committee is to make sure that the criteria pertaining to eligibility or initial allocation were applied to an individual's application in a correct manner. The Committee is to be made up of one state director (or his designee) from each state in the South Atlantic Council's area of jurisdiction and the NMFS Regional Director, or his designee. NOAA General Counsel will have a non-voting advisory role on the Committee.
- V. When the number of vessels is reduced to the optimum level (to be determined in the future), the requirement of exchanging 3/2 permits for 1 new permit will be dropped. These changes will be accomplished through a plan amendment.

### **ACTION 3. Redefine overfishing and optimum yield:**

- A. A snapper grouper species (including jewfish) is considered to be overfished when the transitional spawning potential ratio (SPR) is below 20%.
  - B. The South Atlantic Council's target level or Optimum Yield (OY) is 40% static SPR.
  - C. When a stock is overfished (transitional SPR less than 20%), a rebuilding program that makes consistent progress toward restoring stock condition must be implemented and continued until the stock is restored beyond the overfished condition. The rebuilding program must be designed to achieve recovery within an acceptable time frame as specified by the council. The council will continue to rebuild the stock until the stock is restored to the management target (OY).
  - D. When a stock is not overfished (transitional SPR equal to or greater than 20%), the act of overfishing is defined as a static SPR that exceeds 20% (i.e., F20%). If fishing mortality rates that exceed the level associated with the static SPR overfished level are maintained, the stock may become overfished. Therefore, if overfishing is occurring, a program to reduce fishing mortality rates toward management target levels (OY) will be implemented, even if the stock is not in an overfished condition.
  - E. The threshold level for snapper grouper species is defined as 10% transitional SPR.
- If the stock(s) were to be overfished to such an extent that their transitional SPR was below the threshold level, the council will take appropriate action including but not limited to eliminating directed fishing mortality and evaluating measures to eliminate any bycatch mortality in a timely manner through the framework procedure.
- F. For species, when there is insufficient information to determine whether the stock is overfished (transitional SPR), overfishing is defined as a fishing mortality rate in excess of the fishing mortality rate corresponding to a default static SPR of 30%. If overfishing is occurring, a program to reduce fishing mortality rates to at least the level corresponding to management target levels will be implemented.
  - G. The timeframe for recovery of overfished stocks remains unchanged (see No Action option below for actual wording). For species which were not documented as overfished in Amendment 3, year 1 is the year in which the species is documented as being overfished. For example, gag was documented as being overfished in the 1996 assessment; therefore, year 1 = 1996.

### **Other Possible Options:**

- Option 1.** No Action.
- Option 2.** Specify a threshold level in the range of 5% to 30% Spawning Potential Ratio (SPR).
- Option 3.** Specify a target level in the range of 30% to 50% Spawning Potential Ratio (SPR).
- Option 4.** Establish species specific definitions of overfishing, target, and threshold levels.

### **ACTION 4. Increase the red porgy minimum size limit from 12" TL to 14" TL for both recreational and commercial fishermen and establish a recreational bag limit of 2.**

### **Other Possible Options:**

- Option 1.** No Action.
- Option 2.** Establish a recreational bag limit of 1 - 5 red porgy.

*Continued*



**Option 3.** Increase the recreational minimum size limit from 12" TL to 14" TL and implement a bag limit of 3 - 5.

**ACTION 5. Increase the black sea bass minimum size limit from 8" TL to 10" TL for both recreational and commercial fishermen.**

**Other Possible Options:**

**Option 1.** No Action.

**Option 2.** Increase the minimum size limit from 8" to 9" TL for both recreational and commercial fishermen.

**ACTION 6. Designate a black sea bass Special Management Zone**

The Council has no preferred management option:

**Option 1.** No Action.

**Option 2.** Prohibit the use of black sea bass pots within a range of 3 – 18 or 3 – 30 miles off shore in the area bounded by a line due east from Frying Pan Shoals, North Carolina (OR a line following the shoals) to a line south, extending due east of Cape Romain, South Carolina.

**Option 3.** Allow the use of black sea bass pots in the proposed area of closure only during December 1 through April 1. Black sea bass pots would be prohibited in this area at other times.

**Option 4.** Require the tending of black sea bass pots in the proposed area of closure.

**ACTION 7. Establish a recreational bag limit of 5 – 20 black sea.**

**Other Possible Options:**

**Option 1.** No Action.

**ACTION 8. Require escape vents on black sea bass pots.**

Black sea bass pots would be required to have a minimum escape vent ranging from 1" to 1" x 5" to 6" or of 1.75" to 2.50" diameter; or square diameter of 1" to 2" by 2". Also, require a range of 1 to 4 vents on black sea bass pots.

**Other Possible Options:**

**Option 1.** No Action.

**ACTION 9. Require the use of escape panels with degradable fasteners in sea bass pots.**

A black sea bass pot that is used or possessed in the South Atlantic EEZ north of 28°35.1' N. Lat. is required to have on at least one side, excluding top and bottom, a panel or door with an opening equal to or larger than the interior end of the trap's throat (funnel). The hinges and fasteners of each panel or door must be made of the following degradable materials: Ungalvanized or uncoated wire no larger than 19 gauge or 0.041 inches diameter.

**Other Possible Options:**

**Option 1.** No Action.

**ACTION 10. Prohibit sale of bag limit caught greater amberjack during April south of Cape Canaveral, Florida.**

**Other Possible Options:**

**Option 1.** No Action.

**Option 2.** Prohibit any retention during April.

**Option 3.** Expand the bag limit of 3 for both recreational and commercial fisheries in April to include May. Prohibit sale during April and May.

**Option 4.** Prohibit all harvest above the bag limit and all sale, during April and May in the EEZ off Florida.

**Option 5.** Declare the EEZ adjacent to Monroe County a special area of protection for the fishery by:

- Expanding the present closure from April through May of each year.
- Prohibit the sale of all fish caught during this closure. Fish caught under the recreational bag limit should not be allowed to be sold during this time.
- Reduce the present recreational bag limit of 3 to 1 fish per person per day. (This rule would be in effect yearly, not just during the spawning season.) On charter boats this would exclude the Captain and Mate.

**Option 6.** Prohibit coring (removal of head & tail).

*Continued*

- Option 7.** Establish a quota equal to 50% – 80% of the average landings based on data from 1986-95 for greater amberjack, and change the start of the fishing year from January 1 to July 1. . Also, establish a commercial trip limit for greater amberjack of 500 – 1,000 pounds per trip if a quota is chosen.
- Option 8.** Reduce the recreational bag limit from 3 to 2 or 1.
- Option 9.** Reduce the greater amberjack bag limit to 1, and change the recreational size limit to 20” for all *Seriola* spp.

**ACTION 11. Implement an annual vermilion snapper commercial quota of 600,000 pounds, a recreational bag limit of 5 fish and recreational minimum size limit of 12” (effective on January 1, 1998).**

**Other Possible Options:**

- Option 1.** No Action.
- Option 2.** Reduce the recreational and commercial catch 45% with a bag limit and quota; no size limit.
- Option 3.** Reduce the recreational and commercial catch 43% with a bag limit and quota (or effort reduction); minimum size limit of 10”.

**ACTION 12. Increase the gag minimum size limit from 20” TL to 24” TL for the commercial and recreational fisheries, and prohibit all harvest January through March.**

**Other Possible Options:**

- Option 1.** No Action.
- Option 2.** Prohibit all harvest of gag January through March each year.
- Option 3.** Prohibit harvest of gag in excess of the 5-grouper aggregate bag limit (excluding Nassau grouper, jewfish, speckled hind and warsaw grouper) January through March and prohibit sale January through March.
- Option 4.** Prohibit sale and establish a possession limit of 1 gag per person per day January through March.
- Option 5.** Establish a 100 – 1,000 pound trip limit January - March.
- Option 6.** Establish a total allowable catch (TAC) for gag. The total catch should be reduced by 50% in one year or phased-in over a period of four years with 12.5% decrease in Year one, and 12.5% decrease in each of the following three years. Year 1 is the 1997 fishing year. The 50% reduction in total catch by itself should achieve the minimum status that would not be termed overfishing (SPR <0.20). The reduction in commercial catch would be achieved through quotas based on 1995 logbook reporting and the reduction in recreational catch would be achieved through bag limits.
- Option 7.** Increase the minimum size limit from 20” TL to 24” TL.
- Option 8.** Establish a seasonal closure to achieve a 30% - 40% reduction in total landings.

**ACTION 13. Require logbook reporting by the 10th of the month following the month of activity.**

**Other Possible Options:**

- Option 1.** No Action.
- Option 2.** Require that all reports submitted more than two months late be accompanied by landings receipts or other such supporting documentation.
- Option 3.** Allow 30 days for submission of report after the sale of fish.

**ACTION 14. Establish a transit zone through the South Atlantic EEZ and allow transit of the South Atlantic EEZ with possession of both the Gulf reef fish permit and fish trap permit/endorsement.**

**Other Possible Options:**

- Option 1.** No Action.
- Option 2.** Prohibit the possession of fish traps in the South Atlantic EEZ except for the transit zone.

**ACTION 15. Specify that vessels with bottom longline gear aboard may only possess snowy grouper, tilefish, yellowedge grouper and other deepwater species.**

**Other Possible Options:**

- Option 1.** No Action.

*Continued*

**smaller. Allow one net per boat.**

**Other Possible Options:**

**Option 1.** No Action.

**Option 2.** Allow possession of cast nets.

**ACTION 17. Establish a closure of the EEZ for species in the snapper grouper management unit.**

The Council has no preferred management option and has included a number of options for public comment. The Council will review comments received during the public hearings and comment period and determine the appropriate action.

**Option 1.** No Action.

**Option 2.** Implement a January - April closure.

**Option 3.** Close other months to achieve 30% – 40% reductions in landings.

**ACTION 18. Implement a trip limit for all temperate mid-shelf snapper grouper species**

The Council has no preferred management option and has included a number of options for public comment. The Council will review comments received during the public hearings and comment period and determine what, if any, action should be taken.

**Option 1.** No Action.

**Option 2.** Implement a 1,000 -2,500 pound trip limit.

**Option 3.** Implement a 200 – 2,000 pounds trip limit depending on vessel operating characteristics.

**ACTION 19. Establish an aggregate temperate mid-shelf species quota.**

The Council has no preferred management option and has included a number of options for public comment. The Council will review comments received during the public hearings and comment period and determine what, if any, action should be taken.

**Option 1.** No Action.

**Option 2.** Establish an aggregate temperate mid-shelf species (TEMS) quota to achieve a 30% – 40% reduction in landings using 1986 – 1995 average landings as the base.

**ACTION 20. Species within the snapper grouper management unit (whether whole or fillets) caught in Bahamian waters in accordance with Bahamian law may be possessed aboard a vessel in the EEZ and landed in the U.S. provided the vessel is in transit from the Bahamas and valid Bahamian fishing and cruising permits are onboard.**

**Other Possible Options:**

**Option 1.** No Action.



*New Council Chairman, Benjamin C. Hartig of Hobe Sound, Florida (right), on behalf of the council, thanks former chairman, David C. Cupka of Charleston, South Carolina (left) for a job well done.*

**Please contact the following state agencies for regulations up to three miles offshore (state waters) in the South Atlantic:**

Florida Marine Fisheries Commission  
2540 Executive Center Circle West, Suite 106  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
(904) 487-0554

Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
Coastal Resources Division  
One Conservation Way  
Brunswick, GA 31523-8600  
(912) 264-7218

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries  
P.O. Box 769  
Morehead City, NC 28557  
(919) 726-7021

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources  
Marine Resources Division  
P.O. Box 12559  
Charleston, SC 29412  
(803) 795-6350

The South Atlantic Council, one of eight U.S. regional fishery management councils, establishes conservation measures to ensure the viability of marine resources in federal waters (from three to two hundred nautical miles) off the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and east Florida. Fishery Management Plans prepared by the council are designed to produce optimum yield, while preventing overfishing of our valuable resources. Council staff is available to answer questions during business hours by telephone at (803) 571-4366; by FAX at (803) 769-4520; or by E-Mail at [safmc@safmc.nmfs.gov](mailto:safmc@safmc.nmfs.gov).

### *Editor's Note*

The South Atlantic Update is published by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Its purpose is to report developments in fisheries management that would be of interest to its readers. Please credit the council when reprinting articles used in this newsletter. Anyone wishing to submit information or articles pertaining to fishing or fisheries management, or letters to the editor on a pertinent issue, is invited and encouraged to do so. Submissions may be mailed to Susan Buchanan, Editor, South Atlantic Update, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699, or may be sent via the internet; Email address: [Susan\\_Buchanan@safmc.nmfs.gov](mailto:Susan_Buchanan@safmc.nmfs.gov)



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### **Non-Voting Members**

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Washington, DC  
(202) 452-8700

**US Fish & Wildlife**  
Atlanta, GA  
(404) 331-3588

**US Coast Guard**  
Miami, FL  
(305) 536-5654

**State Department**  
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(202) 647-7948

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•Snapper Grouper Amendment 8 Public Hearings Scheduled, See page 11 for Dates and Locations.

•For a List of Options in Snapper Grouper Amendment 8, see pages 12-18.

•South Atlantic Council Welcomes New Council Member Marsha Hass of Charleston, SC!

•Golden Crab Regulations Final. See page 6.

•Rock Shrimp Regulations Final. See page 8 for a map of the closed area; See page 9 for a list of the regulations.

•Atlantic King Mackerel Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for 1996/ 1997 Modified to 6.8 million pounds. See page 1.